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(54) Title: POLYPEPTIDES MIMICKING THE ACTIVITY OF HUMAN ERYTHROPOIETIN			
(57) Abstract Polypeptides or erythropoietin muteins, characterised by an amino acid sequence which is different from that of human erythropoietin and presents in the informational spectrum obtained by Fourier transformation according to the method of informational analyses, substantially the same frequencies of natural erythropoietin.			

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POLYPEPTIDES MIMICKING THE ACTIVITY OF HUMAN
ERYTHROPOIETIN

The present invention refers to polypeptides having a sequence obtained by the informational spectra method and the ability of stimulating the production of reticulocytes and red blood cells from bone marrow cells
5 as well as hemoglobin synthesis and iron uptake.

Human erythropoietin (EPO), an hormone playing a fundamental role in erythropoiesis, is a glycoprotein having a molecular weight of about 34-38 kd, the primary structure of which is shown in Figure 1.

10 EPO is presently obtained by recombinant DNA techniques using eukaryotic cells which can glycosylate the expression product.

The availability of shorter polypeptides, possibly active even in unglycosylated form mimicking the
15 biological activity of human EPO, would be an highly desirable goal allowing the convenient preparation by synthetic procedures.

It has now been found that polypeptides, having in the informational spectrum obtained by Fourier
20 transformation according to the informational analysis method substantially the same frequencies of natural erythropoietin, have substantially the same activity of human erythropoietin.

The informational analysis method (ISM), first
25 disclosed by Veljkovic V. et al. in IEEE Trans. Biomed. Eng. 32, 337 (1985); Cancer Biochem. Biophys. 9, 139, 1987; Phys. Rev. Lett. 29, 105, (1972) and Phys. Lett. 45A, 41, (1973) the content of which is herein

incorporated by reference, is based on the analysis of the information encoded in primary structure which is expressed by molecular electric oscillations propagating through polar environment. Based on the previously demonstrated strong correlation between electron-ion interaction potential (hereinafter EIIP) [Veljkovic V., A theoretical approach to preselection of carcinogens and chemical carcinogenesis, Gordon & Breach Sci. Pub., New York, 1980; Politzer P. and Truhlar D. G., Chemical applications of atomic and molecular electrostatic potential, Plenum Press, New York, 1981); Politzer P., Toxicol, Lett. 43, 227 (1988)] it has been proposed that information expressed by electric oscillations is encoded in protein primary structure by distribution of the values of EIIP of amino acids.

According to this approach, the protein sequences are transformed into signals by assignment of numerical values to each amino acid. These values correspond to EIIP [Veljkovic V. and Slavic I., Phys. Rev. Lett., 29, 105 (1972); Veljkovic V. Phys. Lett., 45A, 41 (1973)]. The signal obtained is then decomposed in periodical function by Fourier transformation. The result is a series of frequencies and their amplitudes. The obtained frequencies correspond to the distribution of structural motifs with defined physico-chemical characteristics responsible for biological function of protein. When comparing proteins which share the same biological or biochemical function, the technique allows detection of code/frequency pairs which are specific for their common biological properties. The method is insensitive to the location of the motifs and, thus, does not require

previous alignment of the sequence. The ISM was successfully applied in structure/function analysis and de novo design of peptides [Cosic I. and Nesis D., Eur.J. Biochem., 170, 247 (1988); Skerl V., and Pavlovic M., FEBS Lett., 239, 1411 (1988); Veljkovic V. and Metlas R., Cancer Biochem. Biophys., 10, 191 (1988); Cosic I. et al., Biochemie, 71, 333 (1989); Lalovic D. and Veljkovic V., Biosystems, 23, 311 (1989); Cosic I., Resonant recognition model of protein-protein and protein-DNA recognition, in Bioinstrumentation and Biosensor (edited by Weis D.L.), Marcel Dekker, Inc., New York (1990); Cosic I. et al., Eur. J. Biochem. 198, 113 (1991); Cosic I. and Hearn M.T. W., J. Mol. Recognition., 4, 57 (1991); Veljkovic V. et al., Biochem. Biophys. Res. Commun., 189, 705 (1992); Krsmanovic B. et al., WO 93/17108.

An object of the invention is provided by EPO muteins having an homology degree with natural erythropoietin lower than 60% or polypeptides having from 20 to 100, preferably from 15 to 70 amino acids, characterized by informational spectrum having substantially the same frequencies as found in the informational spectrum of natural erythropoietin.

The muteins or polypeptides according to the invention may be designed so as to include appropriate O- or N-glycosilation sites even though it has been surprisingly found that glycosilation is not always necessary for the biological activity.

More particularly, the muteins or polypeptides of the invention are characterized by the frequency component 0.312 ± 0.004 in the informational spectrum

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and at least one of the following frequency components:
0.023, 0.156, 0.180, 0.185, 0.258, 0.273, 0.285, 0.363
and 0.500 determined with the accuracy of ± 0.004 .

Preferred muteins of the invention are shown in
5 Figures 2a and 2b (Sequence Id n. 1 and 2) whereas
preferred polypeptides are shown in Figure 3 (Sequence
Id n. 3, 4, 5 and 6). In Figures 1, 2a and 2b, the
predicted amphipathic α helices are underlined with
double line (===). Residues predicted to be on the
10 surface are underlined. Each of the three N-linked and
one of O-linked glycosylation sites is designated by an
asterisk. The mutations are designated by small letters.

Another group of preferred peptides according to
the invention and having 16-40 aminoacids, is
15 represented by the following general formula: X1-Tyr-X2-
Cys-X3-X4-Gly-Pro-X5-Thr-Trp-X6-Cys-X7-Pro-X8, where X1
= Thr, Gln, His or Asp, X2 = Ser, Asn, Gly, Pro or Ala,
X3 = Thr, Gln, Asp, Ser, Asn, Gly, Pro, Ala, Ile, Val,
Phe, Lys, Tyr, Met or Glu, X4 = Phe, Val or Met, X5 =
20 Leu, Ile, Met or Val, X6 = Leu, Ile or Val, X7 = Lys,
Arg or Asp, and X8 = Gln, Thr, His, Ser, Ala, Val or
Leu. Optionally the peptide may be cyclised or
dimerised.

These peptides are able to bind to the
25 erythropoietin receptor and show in the IS the frequency
component 0.312 and the corresponding amplitude $A \geq$
0.11.

The invention also refers to polynucleotide
sequences coding for said muteins or polypeptides, to
30 expression vectors comprising said polynucleotide
sequences and to hosts transformed or transfected by

said vectors, as well as to nucleotide sequences which hybridize to the above mentioned coding sequences.

The polypeptides sequence of the invention are determined by a procedure involving the following steps:

- 5 1. determination of the consensus characteristic frequencies for the EPO molecules;
2. derivation of a new numerical sequence of the desired length having the same characteristic frequencies using inverse Fourier transformation;
- 10 3. determination of the amino acid corresponding to each element of this new numerical sequence from values of EIIP (see Table 1):

Table 1

	Amino acid	EIIP [Ry]*
	L	0.0000
5	I	0.0000
	N	0.0036
	G	0.0050
	V	0.0057
	E	0.0058
10	P	0.0198
	H	0.0242
	K	0.0371
	A	0.0373
	Y	0.0516
15	W	0.0548
	Q	0.0761
	M	0.0823
	S	0.0829
	C	0.0829
20	T	0.0941
	F	0.0946
	R	0.0959
	D	0.1263

25 * Ry = Rydberg unit

The polypeptides may be obtained by conventional methods of peptide synthesis or by known recombinant DNA techniques.

30 The polypeptides or muteins of the invention may be administered to humans or animals in form of suitable pharmaceutical compositions, usually but not exclusively

to be administered parenterally. Said compositions will contain from 1 to about 100 mg of mutein or polypeptide for the treatment of the same pathological conditions presently treated with human or recombinant EPO.

5 The following examples further illustrate the invention.

Example 1

Analysis of amino acid sequences by the ISM

10 In the first step of the ISM analysis each constitutive element (amino acid) in analyzed sequence is represented by corresponding EIIP value. For calculation of EIIP the following expression derived from the "general model pseudopotential" [Veljkovic V. and Slavic I., Phys. Rev. Lett., 29, 105 (1972);
15 Veljkovic V., Phys. Lett., 45A, 41 (1973)] was used:

$$W = 0.25 Z^* \sin (1.04 \pi Z^*)/2 \quad (1)$$

where Z^* is the average quasi-valence number determined by:

$$Z^* = \sum_{i=1}^m n_i Z_i / N \quad (2)$$

20 where Z is the number of valence electrons of the i -th atomic component, n_i - the number of atoms of the i -th component, m and N - the number of atomic components and total number of atoms in the side group, respectively. The values of EIIP for side groups of amino acids
25 calculated in accord with Eq. (1) are given in Table 1.

The numerical serie determined in this way is finite-length deterministic discrete signal containing information corresponding to selective long-distance interaction among biological macromolecules. In order to
30 analyze this information, the obtained numerical sequence was subjected to discrete Fourier

8

transformation (DFT), which is defined as follows [Rabiner R., L. and Gold B., *Theory and applications of digital processing*. Prentice-Hall Inc., Englewood 1975]]:

$$X(n) = \sum_{m=0}^{N-1} x(m) e^{-j \frac{2\pi}{N} nm}, \quad n = 1, 2, \dots, N/2 \quad (3)$$

Here $x(m)$ is the m -th of a given numerical series, and $X(n)$ are coefficients of DFT. The coefficients are describing the amplitude, phase, and frequency of sinusoids from which original signal consists. The absolute value of complex DFT coefficients determines the amplitude spectrum which is in the ISM defined as *informational spectrum* (IS) and represented by the following equation:

$$S(n) = X(n)X^*(n) = |X(n)|^2, \quad n = 1, 2, \dots, N/2, \quad (4)$$

It was assumed that points in analyzed numerical sequences are equidistant with the distance $d = 1$. In this case the maximal frequency in the spectrum is $F_{\max} = 1/2d = 0.5$. It is important to note that the frequency range is independent of number of points in the sequence. The total number of points in the sequence (i.e. number of amino acids in the analyzed primary structure) influences only the resolution of IS. In the case of an N -point sequence, the resolution equals $1/N$. The minimal length of sequence that can be analyzed by ISM is determined by the desired resolution of the spectrum. Therefore, this number is determined by the expected number of peaks which are to be strictly separated and cannot be exactly defined. The minimal length of sequence which can be analyzed by ISM with suitable accuracy is 16 amino acids.

In this way, the information primarily defined by the sequence of symbols representing amino acids is presented in spectral form which is more suitable for mathematical analysis. It is important to note that ISM does not influence this information and represents only a tool for its analysis (like the prism which decomposes the white light in its spectral components). Each frequency in the IS represents a particular informational component encoded in the primary structure by regularly distributed structural motifs with similar electronic properties.

Example 2

Application of the technique in example 1 to the analysis of EPO proteins

The algorithmic procedures were applied to the mammalian EPO protein sequences.

The analysis procedure comprises the following steps:

1. each amino acid sequences was converted to the numerical sequence by representing each amino acid with the corresponding value of the EIIP;
2. this numerical sequence was converted into a numerical spectrum using fast Fourier transform (hereinafter FFT);
3. spectra were mutually compared using cross-spectral analysis with the aim to extract common frequency components.

From the analysis of cross-spectra of EPO molecules from various mammalian species (mouse, rat, rabbit, ship, monkey and human) one can deduce a set of characteristic frequencies which predominates in the

10

obtained CIS. In Table 2 all characteristics frequencies in the EPO CIS with $S/N > 1$ are given:

Table 2

	F1	0.023
5	F2	0.156
	F3	0.180
	F4	0.195
	F5	0.258
	F6	0.273
10	F7	0.285
	F8	0.312
	F9	0.363
	F10	0.500

All frequency components in Table 2 are determined with accuracy of ± 0.004 .

From the obtained results, it is possible to conclude that information which is essential for biological activity of the analyzed EPO molecules is completely determined with the set of characteristic frequencies given in Table 2.

Example 3Application of the technique in example 1 to the analysis of EPO-EPOR interaction

In order to determine which of the characteristic frequency components from Table 2 determines the information that is essential for human EPO-EPOR interaction, the cross-spectrum between these two proteins is obtained.

The characteristic frequencies corresponding to the first 15 amplitudes in EPO-EPOR cross-spectrum are given in Table 3.

11

Table 3

	F	S/N
	0.311	10.6
	0.258	7.5
5	0.272	7.3
	0.113	7.0
	0.361	7.0
	0.498	5.2
	0.430	5.1
10	0.158	5.1
	0.031	4.6
	0.382	4.6
	0.154	4.4
	0.283	4.3
15	0.275	3.9
	0.347	3.9
	0.008	3.5

The results presented in Table 3 show that the main part of information corresponding to human EPO-EPOR interaction is determined by the frequency component 0.311. It is also important to note that, taking into account accuracy of ± 0.004 in the determination of frequency values, 8 of 10 characteristic frequencies from the EPO CIS (Table 2) are also contained within the first 15 characteristic frequencies in the human EPO-EPOR cross-spectrum (Table 3).

Example 4Application of the technique in example 1 to design of EPO muteins

Once the characteristic frequencies for EPO protein family had been determined, it was possible to design

12

EPO muteins introducing a large number of amino acid substitutions in human EPO. The main condition that must be satisfied in the design of these muteins is the conservation of IS of human EPO.

5 In Figure 2a, the primary structure of mutein-1 generated by substitution of 99 (56.6%) amino acids in human EPO is given (Sequence Id n. 1). The IS of this mutein is given in Table 4 and Figure 4a. As can be seen, this IS contains all 10 characteristic EPO
10 frequencies from Table 2, as well as other frequency components corresponding to first 15 amplitudes in IS of the human EPO.

Table 4

	IS (EPO)	IS (mut. 1)	IS (mut. 2)
15	0.359	0.359	0.359
	0.500	0.156	0.500
	0.156	0.500	0.156
	0.195	0.285	0.285
	0.258	0.258	0.258
20	0.285	0.195	0.195
	0.203	0.203	0.273
	0.273	0.273	0.203
	0.180	0.402	0.180
	0.004	0.180	0.301
25	0.445	0.004	0.004
	0.113	0.113	0.211
	0.023	0.172	0.113
	0.312	0.211	0.312
	0.050	0.312	0.402

30 In order to design the mutein that with higher probability will express EPO activity, also structural

characteristics that are important for this biological activity must be taken into account [Boissel JP. et al., J. Biol. Chem., 268, 15983 (1993); Wen D., et al., J. Biol. Chem., 269, 22839 (1994)]. In Figure 2b (Sequence
5 Id n. 2), the primary structure of mutein-2 generated by substitution of 72 (43.4%) amino acids in human EPO is given. This mutein besides conserved IS of human EPO (Table 4 and Figure 4b) also has preserved all structural elements that are important for the
10 biological activity of the human EPO, including all glycosylation sites [Wen D., et al., J. Biol. Chem. 269, 22839 (1994)]. The comparison of the alpha and beta propensity, hydrophilicity, hydrophobicity, solvent accessibility, antigenicity and secondary structure of
15 the human EPO and mutein-2 are given in Figure 5-6.

14
SEQUENCE LISTING

(1) GENERAL INFORMATION:

5

(i) APPLICANT:

(A) NAME: DIAPHARM LIMITED

(B) STREET: Quay House, South Esplanade

(C) CITY: St. Peter Port

(D) STATE: Guernsey

10

(E) COUNTRY: Channel Islands

(F) POSTAL CODE (ZIP): GY1 4EJ

(i) APPLICANT:

(A) NAME: MARKOVIC Dejan

15

(B) STREET: Via Andrea Verga, 5

(C) CITY: Milano

(D) STATE: Italy

(E) COUNTRY: IT

(F) POSTAL CODE (ZIP): I-20144

20

(ii) TITLE OF INVENTION: POLYPEPTIDES MIMICKING THE
ACTIVITY OF HUMAN ERYTHRO-
POIETIN

25

(iii) NUMBER OF SEQUENCES: 6

(iv) COMPUTER READABLE FORM:

(A) MEDIUM TYPE: Floppy disk

(B) COMPUTER: IBM PC compatible

30

(C) OPERATING SYSTEM: PC-DOS/MS-DOS

(D) SOFTWARE: PatentIn Release #1.0, Version

15

#1.30 (EPO)

(2) INFORMATION FOR SEQ ID NO: 1:

5 (i) SEQUENCE CHARACTERISTICS:

(A) LENGTH: 166 amino acids

(B) TYPE: amino acid

(C) STRANDEDNESS: single

(D) TOPOLOGY: linear

10

(ii) MOLECULE TYPE: protein

(xi) SEQUENCE DESCRIPTION: SEQ ID NO: 1:

15 Trp Gly Gly Arg Val Val Cys Asp Thr Arg Ile Val Glu Arg
 1 5 10
 Tyr Val Val Glu Trp His Glu Trp Glu Asn Ile Ser Ser Pro
 15 20 25
 Cys Trp Glu Lys Cys Thr Val Asn Glu Asn Val Ser Ile Gly
 20 30 35 40
 Asp Ser His Ile Asn Phe Tyr Trp Ala His Arg Met Glu Ile
 45 50 55
 Pro Gln Gln Trp Leu Glu Ile Ala Gln Pro Val Trp Val Val
 60 65 70
 25 Thr Glu Trp Ile Val Arg Pro Gln Trp Val Val Val Asn Ser
 75 80
 Thr Gln Gly Ala Glu Gly Val Gln Val Lys Leu Asp His Trp
 85 90 95
 Ile Thr Pro Val Arg Thr Val Ser Ser Val Val Arg Trp Val
 30 100 105 110
 Pro Trp Gln His Glu Trp Val Thr Gly Gly Asp Ala Ala Ser
 115 120 125
 Ala Ala Gly Val Arg Ser Val Ser Trp Asp Ser Phe Arg His
 130 135 140

16

Val	Phe	Arg	Leu	Tyr	Thr	Asn	Phe	Val	Arg	Gly	His	Val	His
			145						150				
Val	Tyr	Ser	Gly	Glu	Trp	Cys	Arg	Ser	Pro	Asp	Arg		
155					160					165			

5

(2) INFORMATION FOR SEQ ID NO: 2:

(i) SEQUENCE CHARACTERISTICS:

- (A) LENGTH: 166 amino acids
- (B) TYPE: amino acid
- (C) STRANDEDNESS: single
- (D) TOPOLOGY: linear

10

(ii) MOLECULE TYPE: protein

15

(xi) SEQUENCE DESCRIPTION: SEQ ID NO: 2:

Trp	Gly	Gly	Arg	Val	Val	Cys	Asp	Ser	Arg	Val	Leu	Glu	Arg
1				5					10				
Tyr	Leu	Leu	Glu	Ala	His	Glu	Ala	Glu	Asn	Ile	Thr	Ser	Pro
15				20					25				
Cys	Trp	Glu	Lys	Cys	Thr	Val	Asn	Glu	Asn	Ile	Thr	Ile	Pro
	30				35					40			
Asp	Ser	His	Ile	Asn	Phe	Tyr	Trp	Ala	His	Arg	Met	Glu	Ile
25		45				50					55		
Pro	Gln	Gln	Ala	Leu	Glu	Leu	Trp	Gln	Gly	Ala	Leu	Leu	Leu
		60					65					70	
Thr	Glu	Ala	Leu	Val	Arg	Pro	Gln	Trp	Val	Leu	Val	Asn	Ser
			75					80				85	
Ser	Gln	Gly	Ala	Glu	Gly	Leu	Gln	Leu	His	Leu	Asp	His	Ala
30				90					95				
Leu	Thr	Pro	Leu	Arg	Thr	Leu	Ser	Ser	Val	Val	Arg	Trp	Val
	100					105					110		

17

Pro Trp Gln His Glu Trp Val Thr Gly Gly Asp Ala Ala Ser
 115 120 125

Ala Ala Gly Val Arg Ser Leu Ser Ala Asp Ser Phe Arg Lys
 130 135 140

5 Val Phe Arg Leu Tyr Thr Asn Phe Leu Arg Gly His Val His
 145 150

Val Tyr Ser Gly Glu Trp Cys Arg Ser Gly Asp Arg
 155 160 165

10 (2) INFORMATION FOR SEQ ID NO: 3:

(i) SEQUENCE CHARACTERISTICS:

- (A) LENGTH: 25 amino acids
- (B) TYPE: amino acid
- 15 (C) STRANDEDNESS: single
- (D) TOPOLOGY: linear

(ii) MOLECULE TYPE: protein

20 (xi) SEQUENCE DESCRIPTION: SEQ ID NO: 3:

Asp Pro Gln Thr Leu Val Asn Ser Ser Tyr Gln Lys His Asp
 1 5 10

Tyr His Asp Pro Leu Asp Ala His Asp His Glu
 25 15 20 25

(2) INFORMATION FOR SEQ ID NO: 4:

(i) SEQUENCE CHARACTERISTICS:

- 30 (A) LENGTH: 35 amino acids
- (B) TYPE: amino acid
- (C) STRANDEDNESS: single
- (D) TOPOLOGY: linear

(ii) MOLECULE TYPE: protein

(xi) SEQUENCE DESCRIPTION: SEQ ID NO: 4:

5

```

Phe His Lys Arg Trp Ala Ala Ser Ala Ala Gln Trp Trp Thr
1          5                      10

Ala His Arg Trp Met Phe Gly Tyr Asp Trp Lys Gln His Trp
15          20                      25

10 Asp Glu Asn Ile Asp Gln Ile
    30          35

```

(2) INFORMATION FOR SEQ ID NO: 5:

15

(i) SEQUENCE CHARACTERISTICS:

(A) LENGTH: 64 amino acids

(B) TYPE: amino acid

(C) STRANDEDNESS: single

(D) TOPOLOGY: linear

20

(ii) MOLECULE TYPE: protein

(xi) SEQUENCE DESCRIPTION: SEQ ID NO: 5:

25	Thr	Gln	Glu	Trp	Ala	Gln	Met	Ala	Ser	Ala	Phe	Ala	Trp	Arg
	1				5					10				
	Ser	His	Arg	Gln	Ala	Glu	Asn	Ile	Asp	Ala	His	Thr	Glu	Gln
	15					20					25			
30	Thr	Ala	His	Lys	Asp	Ser	Lys	Met	Gln	Leu	Ser	Phe	Lys	Leu
	30					35						40		
	Met	Gln	Thr	Trp	His	Ala	Arg	Gln	Trp	Ala	Ala	Ser	Ala	Ala
			45					50					55	

19
Glu Trp Asp Gln Met Gln Leu Gln
60

(2) INFORMATION FOR SEQ ID NO: 6:

5

(i) SEQUENCE CHARACTERISTICS:

- (A) LENGTH: 55 amino acids
(B) TYPE: amino acid
(C) STRANDEDNESS: single
10 (D) TOPOLOGY: linear

(ii) MOLECULE TYPE: protein

(xi) SEQUENCE DESCRIPTION: SEQ ID NO: 6:

15

Gln	Tyr	Tyr	Thr	Lys	Trp	Trp	Thr	Gln	Gln	Gln	Ala	Tyr	Asp
1				5				10					
Thr	Tyr	Cys	Gln	Tyr	Gln	His	Met	Thr	Val	Asn	Ser	Lys	Trp
15				20				25					
Arg	Gln	Leu	His	Asp	Arg	His	Trp	Trp	Pro	Gln	Arg	Pro	Trp
20				30			35			40			
Tyr	Trp	Gln	Ala	His	Met	Cys	Trp	Tyr	Trp	Cys	Gln	Gln	
			45				50					55	

CLAIMS

1. A polypeptide mimicking the activity of human erythropoietin, having an amino acid sequence which is different from that of human erythropoietin and presents substantially the same frequencies as natural erythropoietin in the information spectrum obtained by Fourier transformation according to the method of informational analysis.
2. A polypeptide according to claim 1, which is an erythropoietin mutein having an homology degree with natural human erythropoietin lower than 60%.
3. A polypeptide according to claim 1 or 2, having from 15 to 70 amino acids.
4. A polypeptide according to any one of claims 1 to 3, having the frequency component 0.312 ± 0.004 in the informational spectrum and at least one of the following frequency components: 0.023, 0.156, 0.180, 0.195, 0.258, 0.273, 0.285, 0.363 and 0.500 the accuracy being ± 0.004 .
5. A polypeptide according to any preceding claim, having any of the primary sequences of sequences Id n. 1-6.
6. A polypeptide according to claim 1 including the amino acid sequence: X1-Tyr-X2-Cys-X3-X4-Gly-Pro-X5-Thr-Trp-X6-Cys-X7-Pro-X8, where X1 = Thr, Gln, His or Asp, X2 = Ser, Asn, Gly, Pro or Ala, X3 = Thr, Gln, Asp, Ser, Asn, Gly, Pro, Ala, Ile, Val, Phe, Lys, Tyr, Met or Glu, X4 = Phe, Val or Met, X5 = Leu, Ile, Met or Val, X6 = Leu, Ile or Val, X7 = Lys, Arg or Asp, and X8 = Gln, Thr, His, Ser, Ala, Val or Leu.

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7. A polynucleotide coding for a polypeptides according to any preceding claim.
8. An expression vector comprising a polynucleotide according to claim 6.
- 5 9. A pharmaceutical composition containing a polypeptide according to any of claims 1 to 5 in admixture with one or more suitable carriers or excipients therefor.
- 10 10. A peptide having human EPO activity but which is not natural human EPO, substantially as described herein.

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Fig. 1

ERYTHROPOIETIN (human)

	10	20	*	30	*
	APPRICDSRV <u>LE</u> RY <u>LL</u> EA <u>KE</u> AE <u>NI</u> TTGCAEHCSLNEN				
	=====				
40	50	60	70		
ITVPDTKVN <u>F</u> YAWKRM <u>EV</u> QQ <u>AV</u> EWQGLALL <u>SE</u> A					
=====					
80	*	90	100	110	
VLRGQALLVNSSQPWE <u>PL</u> QLHVDK <u>AV</u> SGLRSLT <u>LL</u> R					
=====					
120	*	130	140		
ALGAQKEAISPPDAASA <u>PL</u> RTITAD <u>TF</u> RK <u>LF</u> RVYSN <u>F</u>					
=====					
150	160	166			
LRGK <u>KL</u> YTG <u>E</u> ACRTGDR					
=====					

Fig. 2a

MUTEIN 1 - the huma EPO with 99 (59.6%) amino acids substituted

wggRvvCDtRivERYvEwhEwENIsspCwEkCtvNENvsigDshiNF
YwahrMEipQQwIEiaQpvwvtEwivRpQwvvVNStQgaEgvQvkl
DhwitpvRtvssvvRwvpwQhEwvtggDAASAAgRsvswDsFRhvFR
lYtNFvRGhvhvYsGEwCRspDR

Fig. 2b

*MUTEIN 2 - the human EPO with 72 (43.4%) amino acids substituted and
conserved α -structure and glycolisation sites*

wggRvvCDSRVLERYLLEAhEAENITspCwEkCtvNENITipDshi
NfYwahrMEipQQAIEIWQGaLLtEAivRpQwvLVNSSQgaEgL
QLHIDhAltpLRtLssvvRwvpwQhEwvtggDAASAAgRslsADsF
RKvFRlYtNfLRGhvhvYsGEwCRsgDR

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Fig. 3

Peptide 1

DPQTLVNSSYQKHDIYHDPLDAHDHE

Peptide 2

FHKRWAAASAAQWWTAHRWFMFGYDWKQHWDENIDQI

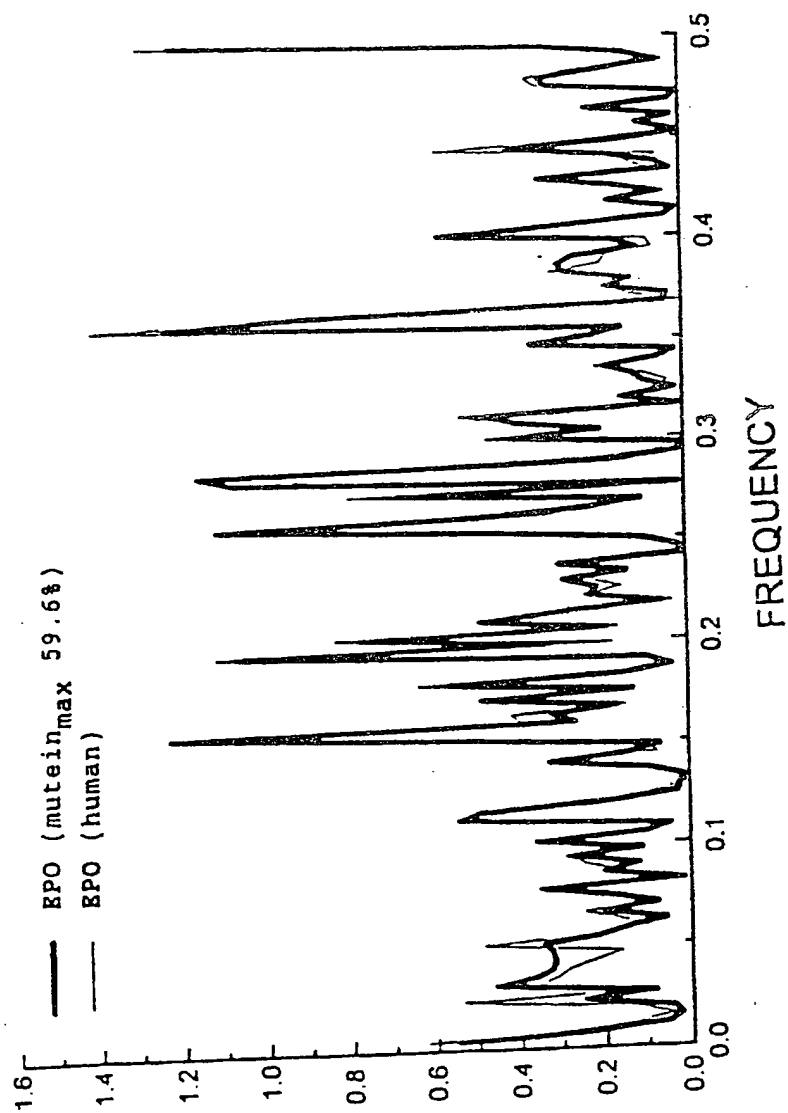
Peptide 3

TQEW AQMASAFAWRSHRQAENIDAHTEQTAHKDSKMQLSFKLMQT
WHARQWAAASAAEWDQMQLQ

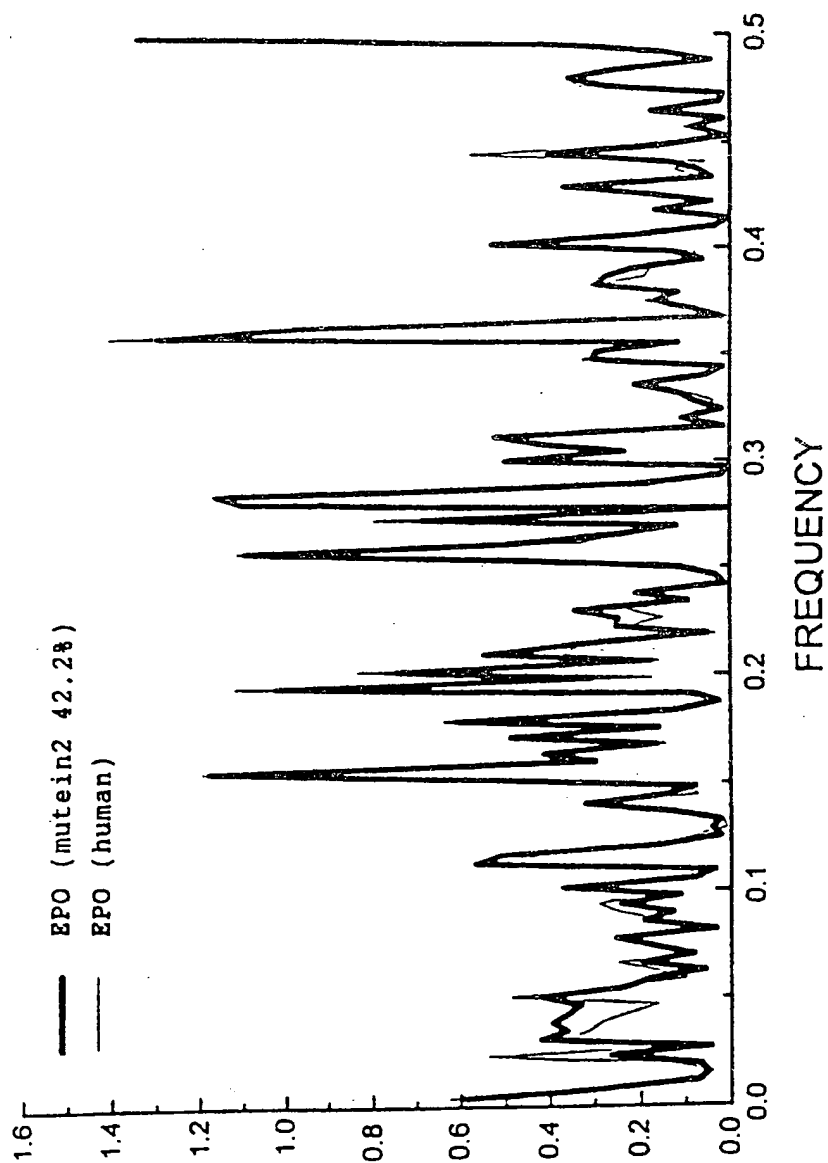
Peptide 4

QYYTKWWTQQQAYDTYCQYQHMTVNSKWRQLHDRHWWPQRPWY
WQAHMCWYWCQQ

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Fig.4a

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Fig. 4b

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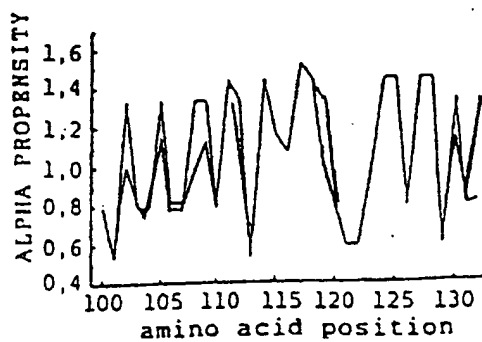
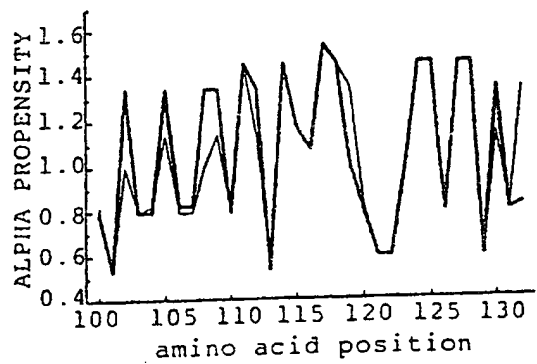
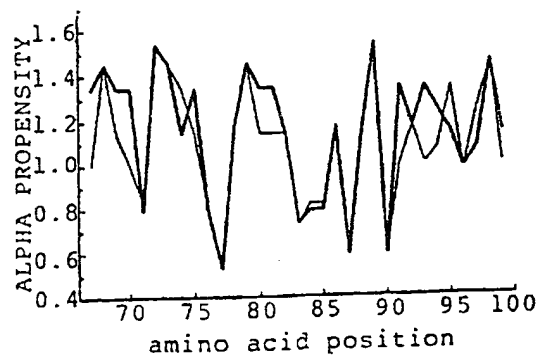
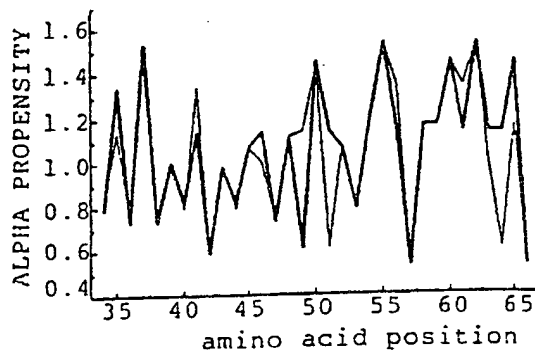
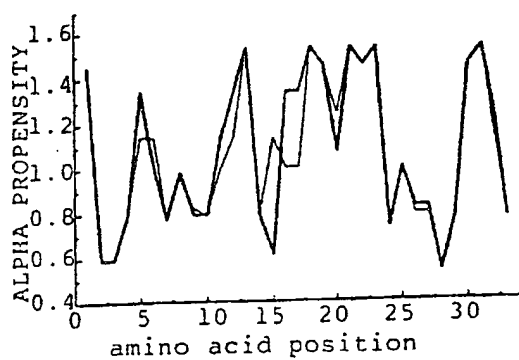
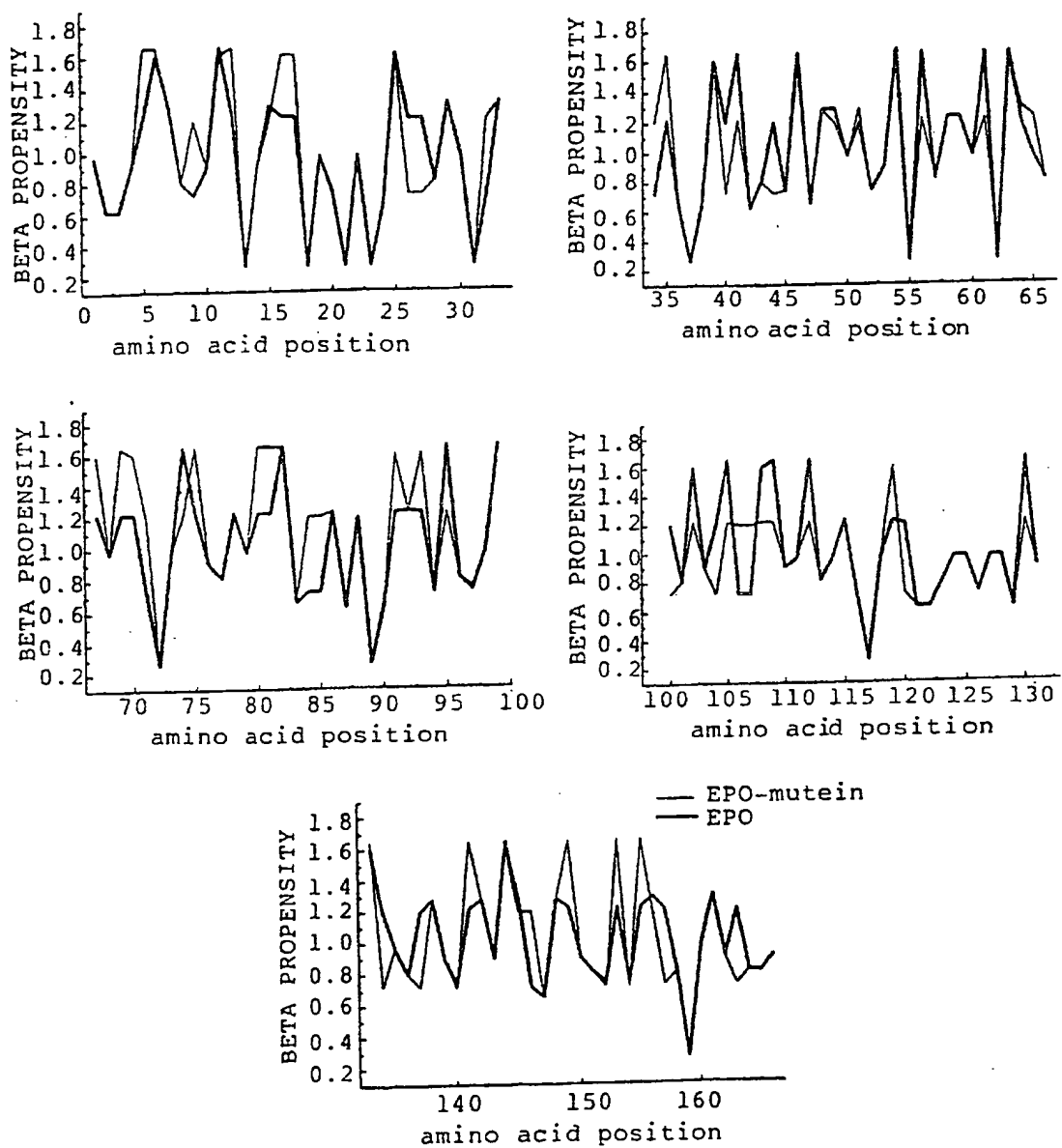
Fig.5

Fig.6

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

Int'l Application No

PCT/EP 97/03228

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER
IPC 6 C07K14/505 A61K38/18

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

IPC 6 C07K

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practical, search terms used)

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category *	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
A	COSIC I: "MACROMOLECULAR BIOACTIVITY: IS IT RESONANT INTERACTION BETWEEN MACROMOLECULES? - THEORY AND APPLICATIONS" IEEE TRANSACTIONS ON BIOMEDICAL ENGINEERING, vol. 41, no. 12, 1 December 1994, pages 1101-1114, XP000556764 see the whole document ---	
A	VELJKOVIC ET AL.: "It is possible to analyse DNA and protein sequences by the method of digital signal processing?" IEEE TRANSACTION ON BIOMEDICAL ENGINEERING, vol. 32, no. 5, 1985, pages 337-341, XP002042233 see the whole document ---	
-/--		

☒ Further documents are listed in the continuation of box C.

☒ Patent family members are listed in annex.

* Special categories of cited documents:

- "A" document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance
- "E" earlier document but published on or after the international filing date
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- "O" document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means
- "P" document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed

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"X" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone

"Y" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art.

"A" document member of the same patent family

Date of the actual completion of the international search

30 September 1997

Date of mailing of the international search report

29.10.97

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Authorized officer

Cervigni, S

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International Application No

PCT/EP 97/03228

C.(Continuation) DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category *	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
A	WO 93 17108 A (CENTRE NAT RECH SCIENT ;UNIV MONASH (AU)) 2 September 1993 see the whole document ---	
A	WO 94 24160 A (BRIGHAM & WOMENS HOSPITAL) 27 October 1994 -----	

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.
PCT/EP 97/03228

Box I Observations where certain claims were found unsearchable (Continuation of Item 1 of first sheet)

This International Search Report has not been established in respect of certain claims under Article 17(2)(a) for the following reasons:

1. ☐ Claims Nos.:
because they relate to subject matter not required to be searched by this Authority, namely:
2. ☒ Claims Nos.:
because they relate to parts of the International Application that do not comply with the prescribed requirements to such an extent that no meaningful International Search can be carried out, specifically:
see FURTHER INFORMATION sheet PCT/ISA/210
3. ☐ Claims Nos.:
because they are dependent claims and are not drafted in accordance with the second and third sentences of Rule 6.4(a).

Box II Observations where unity of invention is lacking (Continuation of item 2 of first sheet)

This International Searching Authority found multiple inventions in this international application, as follows:

1. ☐ As all required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant, this International Search Report covers all searchable claims.
2. ☐ As all searchable claims could be searched without effort justifying an additional fee, this Authority did not invite payment of any additional fee.
3. ☐ As only some of the required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant, this International Search Report covers only those claims for which fees were paid, specifically claims Nos.:
4. ☐ No required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant. Consequently, this International Search Report is restricted to the invention first mentioned in the claims; it is covered by claims Nos.:

Remark on Protest

- ☐ The additional search fees were accompanied by the applicant's protest.
- ☐ No protest accompanied the payment of additional search fees.